



**Figure 12-14.—Compositional balance.**

or value, and the objects all appear to belong in the scene. Balance can best be achieved by offsetting unequal sizes, shapes, tones or objects in a scene.

A good method of balancing objects of unlike shapes and weight is that they be placed at unequal distances from the imaginary center of support. In other words, a small object placed a greater distance from the center counterbalances a much larger object just as though they were on a pair of scales. A small object of considerable importance and weight can be used to balance effectively a large, but less important object (fig. 12-14).

The mental impression of weight is a factor in determining the relative placement of objects in a scene. Size alone does not determine the weight or value of an object. The tone of the object and placement in the photograph are factors in determining its importance.

## FORMS

In analyzing masterpieces to learn the secret of their effectiveness, some experts found that the parts of the photograph are grouped according to some geometrical form. This finding can prove useful in planning the composition of your photograph; however, you are cautioned against applying it too mechanically. If you use these forms without modification, the resulting photographs are likely to be stilted and dull. The real trick is to use them in such a manner as to hide them partially.

The most important basic forms are as follows: the pyramid (sometimes called the triangle), the circle, the cross, the “L,” the radii and the “S.” All of these forms may be used in composition of material in a vertical plane or in a photograph involving perspective. Combinations of these forms, such as a circle and a cross, may appear in one photograph.

### Pyramid

The pyramid form (fig. 12-15) suggests symmetry, solidity, aspiration or dignity. We see it in religious photographs, in church spires and in portraits with the head as the apex of the triangle.

### Circle

The circle lends itself to flower studies, still life, graceful groups or landscapes framed in trees.

### Cross

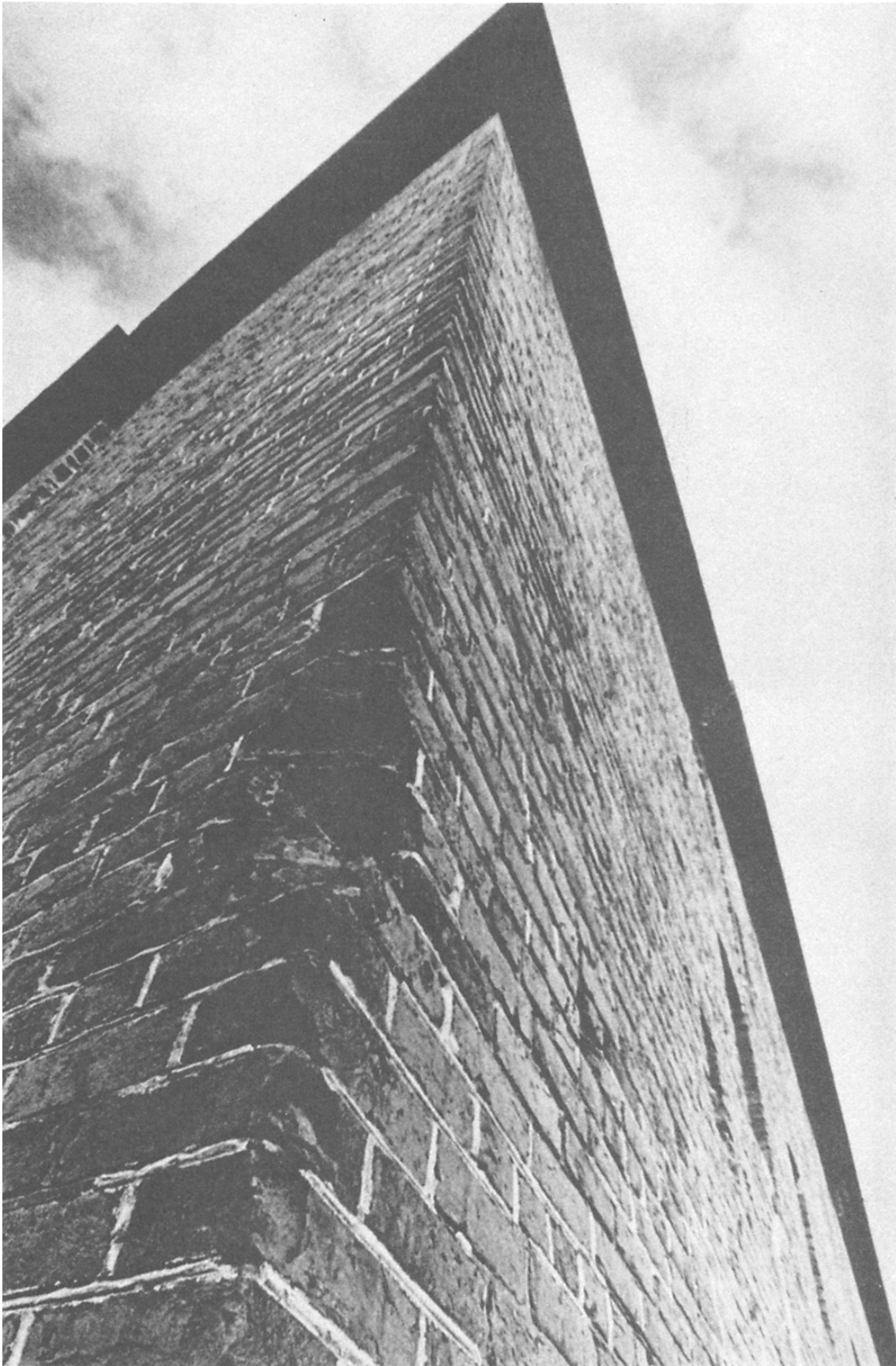
The cross composition is found in a sailboat with its reflection in water forming one line and the horizon forming the other.

### “L”

The “L” composition may occur when a tree at one side of the photograph forms an “L” with the horizon line.

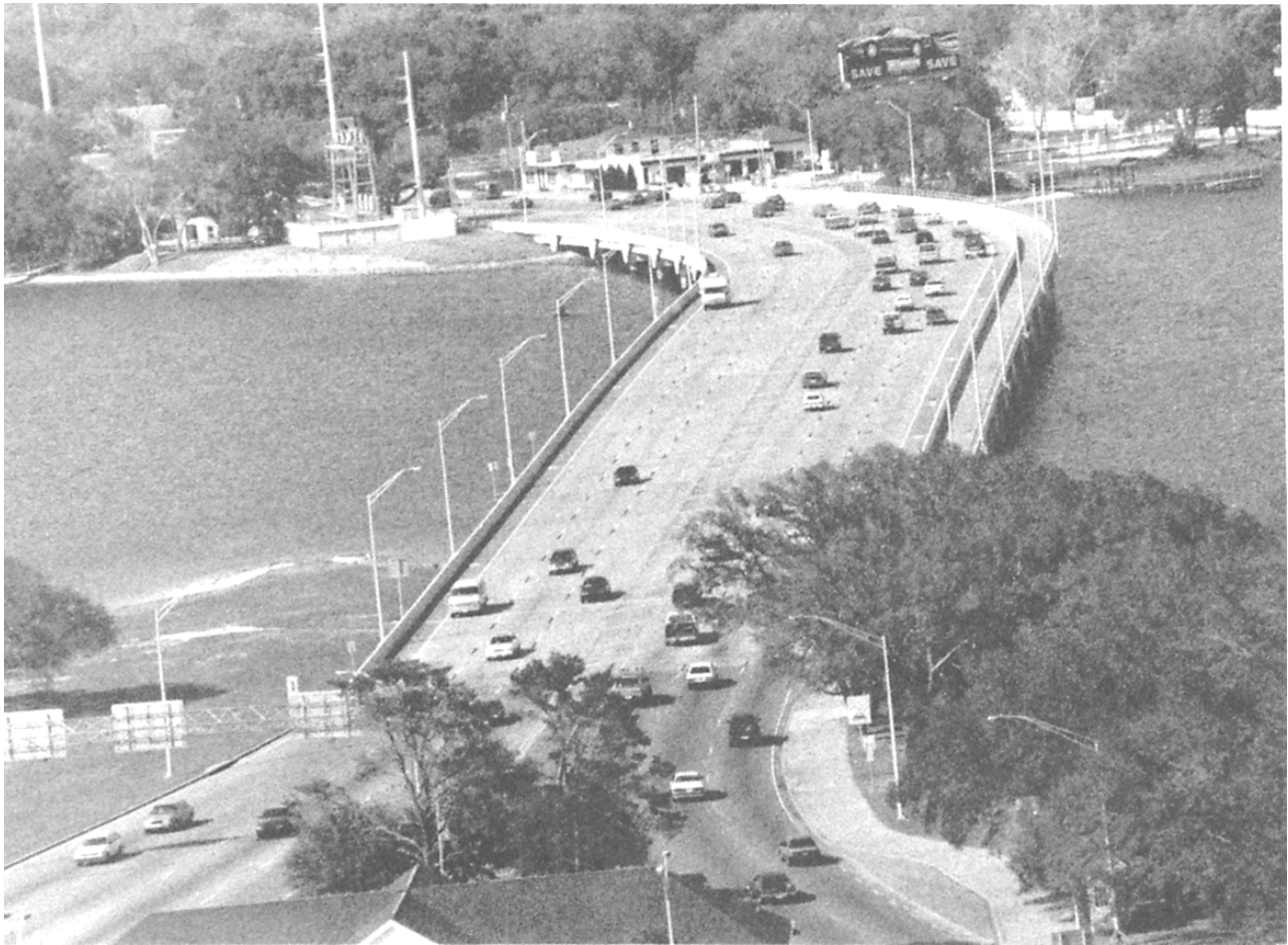
### Radii

The radii composition has lines leading into a center, or out from it, as spokes lead to the hub of a wheel.



Art Giberson  
165.6

**Figure 12-15.—Pyramid form.**



Art Giberson  
165.7

**Figure 12-16.—“S” composition.**

## “S”

The “S” composition, covered earlier as curved lines, is undoubtedly the one photographers use most and the one most popular with viewers (fig. 12-16).

## RHYTHM OR PATTERN

One word often heard in connection with photographs is rhythm. It simply means a repetition of some kind and maybe a shape or a line (fig. 12-17). An illustration in nature is that of a field of wheat, blown by the wind, with each shaft of grain being uniformly bent in the breeze, producing rhythm with changing patterns.

## TONE

Tone refers to the color of each object in a photograph. In black-and-white photography, the gray would run from white through all shades of gray to black

One of the most effective ways of giving impact to the point of interest is to contrast it sharply by color with the other objects in the photograph.

Variations in tones or contrast are important elements in the distribution of weight in a composition. Darker tones create the impression of greater weight. Thus a large light-toned object can be counterbalanced by a smaller dark-toned object. The contrasting tones may be nothing more than shadows or cloud formations. The balancing of equal or unequal tonal areas can be simplified by dividing the photograph space and arranging the objects in opposite thirds of the photograph or at the intersections of the vertical and horizontal lines.

## DEPTH PERCEPTION

As far as the physical characteristics of a photograph are concerned, it has only two dimensions — length and width. Nevertheless, since we are



**Figure 12-17.—Rhythm composition.**

accustomed to viewing nature in three dimensions, it is important that photographs also give the illusion of depth to make them appear more realistic.

The impressions of depth and distance are normally obtained when you mentally compare the relative size of various objects — near objects appearing large and the more distant objects much smaller, even though they are the same physical dimensions. You can easily create the illusion of depth in a photograph by placing common objects in the foreground or background, so the relative sizes of all objects can be determined.

You can also create depth by selecting a camera viewpoint that gives the impression of distance by perspective. This illusion of distance is sometimes enhanced when you exaggerate the perspective by changing the camera position, by using a wide angle lens or by emphasizing texture and modeling through the use of strong sidelighting. Focusing the principal object critically sharp and leaving the background somewhat out of focus usually directs more attention to the subject and tends to increase the feeling of depth. Backlighting the subject gives better separation and makes it appear to stand out more prominently from the background, accentuating the subject and increasing the feeling of depth.

The feeling of depth also can be increased by making the foreground darker in tone than the main point of interest or the background. In some cases, this is done during printing by simply burning in the foreground.



**Figure 12-18.—Good action shot at its peak.**

## ACTION

Action in a photographic composition can be either physical or implied.

In physical action, such as a fleet runner, the motion or position of the runner cannot be held. It changes after the split second in which the photograph is taken.

Action can be implied by a position that suggests a physical action will take place, or it can be facial in which the subject's face suggests or expresses action or a definite emotion.

Good action is shot at its peak as shown in figure 12-18. Where the action is fast-moving, as it is in a sporting event, the peak of action is short and sometimes difficult to determine. To capture this action requires precise timing and know-how. However, in feature development you have the advantage of being able to plan the action logically after studying the job.

## SECURITY AND SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Because of the many new technical developments in the Navy, you will probably come in contact with security problems early in your job as a news photographer.

Photographs disclosing pertinent detailed information of a classified nature are to be accorded the same classification as the subject of the photograph. No classified photographs can be released for publication or transmitted by electronic means.

Officers in command status are responsible for taking official or unofficial photographs and for the supervision, censorship and release of photographs. Unofficial photographs taken aboard ship, station or aircraft are either submitted to the CO or a properly designated officer (such as the PAO) for screening to assure that no classified matter is revealed.

The review of photographs must be objective in nature. The prompt release for publication of unclassified photographs of interest to the public and beneficial to the Navy is considered mandatory. Photographs of general naval life, such as ceremonies and athletic events, are not considered to be of a classified nature and should be released automatically. Photographs of doubtful classification for which release is desired must be referred to CHINFO.

Another violation you should be aware of is that of safety. An example is photographing a sailor aboard ship using an electric deck grinder without safety goggles or wearing unauthorized rubber gloves. If you are not sure of the correct safety measures for a given task, ask the command safety officer.

### THE PICTURE STORY

*LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Identify the different types of picture stories and the applicable technical requirements.*

Knowing the detailed techniques for developing a picture story are requirements for senior journalists. However, at the J03 and J02 levels, you should be familiar with the various categories of picture stories.

### TYPES OF PICTURE STORIES

There are seven basic types of picture stories and they are classified as follows:

- Illustrated text
- Photo-text combination
- Pure picture story
- Picture story within text
- Single picture story
- Abstract picture
- Informal portrait

#### Illustrated Text

For this type of picture story, the text or story is written first, then one or more photographs are used to illustrate, or dramatize, its content. In reality, this is not a true picture story, since the photographs are incidental, rather than an integral part of the text. The photographs are used to dress up the page, make it attractive, give it character or establish a mood. Many magazines use the illustrated text format. They frequently introduce each story with a single illustration, full page size, that serves to attract the readers' attention and leads them into reading the story.

#### Photo-Text Combination

As the name indicates, the photo-text combination type of picture story uses a combination of both photographs and text. However, the photographs carry the weight of the story. The story is told primarily by related photographs arranged in some form of continuity. The text is important and provides worthwhile information relative to the photographs, but it is subordinate to the photographs. This is the easiest type of photograph story to develop and the one most commonly used in the Navy.

#### Pure Picture Story

In the pure picture story there is no text except for a brief introduction outline. Of the seven picture story types, the pure picture story is the most difficult to develop. It is frequently presented in sequences of photographs taken at brief intervals. For example, a pure picture story of a VIP's arrival might show the aircraft landing, the disembarkation from the aircraft, handshaking with the greeting party, the inspection of an honor guard and the VIP entering a limousine. Pure picture stories normally are used only when the action